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Remarks

Entry of the above-noted amendments, reconsideration of the application, and allowance of all claims pending are respectfully requested. By this amendment, claims 22 and 25 are amended. These amendments to the claims constitute a bona fide attempt by applicants to advance prosecution of the application and obtain allowance of certain claims, and are in no way meant to acquiesce to the substance of the rejections. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, figures, and claims and thus, no new matter has been added. Claims 1-6, 8-10, 13-14, 16, 18-26, 28-34, and 36 are pending.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Claims 1-6, 8-10, 13-14, 16, and 18-21 are allowed. Applicants gratefully acknowledge this indication of allowance.

Claim 30 was objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claim 25, but was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants gratefully acknowledge this indication of allowability, and are merely deferring the rewriting of claim 30 in independent form, pending a determination of patentability of base claim 25.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103:

Claims 25-26, 28-29, 31, 33, and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gordon (U.S. Patent No. 5,608,786). Claims 22-25 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Picard et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,233,318). Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Picard in view of Hamel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,943,402). These rejections are respectfully, but most strenuously, traversed.

It is well-settled that there is no anticipation unless (1) all the same elements are (2) found in exactly the same situation and (3) are united in the same way to (4) perform the identical function. Since the Office Action's citations to each of the applied references is missing at least one element of each of applicants' independent claims, applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention is not anticipated by the Office Action's citations to the applied references, as further discussed below.

For explanatory purposes, applicants discuss herein one or more differences between the Office Action's citations to the applied references and the claimed invention with reference to one or more parts of the applied references. This discussion, however, is in no way meant to acquiesce in any characterization that one or more parts of the Office Action's citations to the applied references correspond to the claimed invention.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action's citations to the applied references do not teach or suggest one or more elements of the claimed invention. A careful reading of the Office Action's citations to the applied references fails to teach or suggest, for example, wherein the storage device serves to delete the voicemail message upon deletion of a reference to the voicemail message from each of the first voice mailbox and the second voice mailbox, as recited in applicants' independent claims 22 and 25.

This point is conceded by the Office Action in Paragraph 4.1 on pages 7-8 while explaining the reasons for allowance of claim 1:

Independent claim 1 of current invention discloses a voice messaging system having two of voice mailboxes (which do not store voice messages) linked to a storage device (which stores voice messages) via Internet. Each mailbox is linked to a particular voicemail message by a reference, stored in each mailbox, associated with said particular voicemail message. The storage device deletes the particular voicemail message once references of the voicemail message are deleted from both the first

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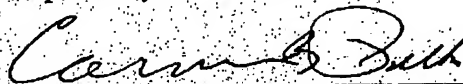
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voice mailbox and the second voice mailbox. *Gordon and Picard fail to teach this deleting feature.* (emphasis added).

Withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, allowance of all claims pending is respectfully requested. If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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